



## Key Messages

The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS), pronounced "en-skass," is a balanced, statewide assessment system that embodies Nebraska's holistic view of students and helps them prepare for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life.

### NSCAS Summative-English Language Arts (ELA)

**In 2017, the NSCAS Summative-ELA assessment replaced the Nebraska School Accountability (NeSA) tests in reading and writing for grades 3 – 8.**

- The combined NSCAS-ELA means fewer exams for students at each grade level
- The NSCAS-ELA is aligned to the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, leading to better outcomes for students, schools, and communities

**The NSCAS-ELA brings increased rigor, relevance, and expectations for all students.**

- Revised ELA standards better prepare students for the next level of learning
- New item types on NSCAS-ELA assess students' higher-order thinking abilities
- Raising the bar on assessments requires substantial movement to align efforts to meet expectations for the future
- Due to the increased rigor, and changes to the assessment system, scores in year two may vary
- At the state level, scores remained the same or improved slightly
- As state standards are raised to meet college and career readiness standards, and instruction reflects those standards, scores are expected to improve and growth is anticipated as the assessment system stabilizes in 2019

### NSCAS-ACT

**NSCAS-ACT replaced NeSA-Reading, Math, Science, and Writing for all high school juniors in 2017.**

- The FREE exam is administered to all juniors
- Taking the comprehensive ACT, including the writing component, means fewer exams for students in the 11th grade
- The Nebraska ACT is aligned to the national ACT standards and meeting expectations on the exam indicates college readiness in our students

**NSCAS-ACT brings increased rigor, relevance, and expectations for all students.**

- All juniors take the ACT, giving a more comprehensive view of ALL Nebraska students\*
- ACT scores remained steady in the initial year of testing even with a larger number of students tested and increased rigor of the exam
- NSCAS-ACT math and science scores were identical to the previous year while NSCAS-ACT ELA dropped slightly
- As state standards are raised to meet national ACT standards, and instruction reflects those standards, scores are expected to improve

*\* An alternate exam was available for those students who qualified for having significant cognitive disabilities.*

**NSCAS-ACT provides more post-secondary opportunities for students in Nebraska.**

- The ACT presents equal testing opportunities for all students at the junior level
- All juniors may choose to send their scores to the colleges of their choice at no cost to the students
- The ACT paves the way for more college scholarship application opportunities



## NSCAS Summative-Mathematics

### Key Messages

The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS), pronounced “en-skass,” is a balanced, statewide assessment system that embodies Nebraska’s holistic view of students and helps them prepare for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life. The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics is a new, computer-adaptive statewide assessment within the NSCAS system.

#### **The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment replaced the Nebraska School Accountability (NeSA) test in math for grades 3 – 8.**

- The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics measures student performance against Nebraska’s College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics, showing whether students have learned what they were expected to learn

#### **The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment better prepares students for the next level of learning.**

- NSCAS Summative-Mathematics brings increased rigor, relevance, and high expectations for all students
- Scores on the NSCAS Summative-Mathematics may seem lower than expected in the initial year of testing due to the increased rigor of the standards as assessed by the test
- There is no comparison to previous summative assessment scores in mathematics as NeSA-Math assessed student performance against a different set of standards
- As district curriculum is adopted to meet Nebraska’s College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics, and instruction reflects those standards, scores are expected to improve

#### **The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment is adaptive and provides in-depth information about what students know in less time.**

- The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment adapts dynamically based on each student’s ability
- Innovative, interactive question formats engage students and enable them to demonstrate higher order thinking
- The assessment provides deeper information about student knowledge
- In 2019, results will be available shortly after the close of the testing window, enabling educators and parents to address roadblocks to student progress in a timely fashion, ahead of the next school year

#### **At the high school level, the NSCAS Summative-ACT, provided for free to all juniors, will continue to serve as the summative assessment in mathematics.**

- The NSCAS Summative-ACT is aligned to the national ACT standards and meeting expectations on the exam indicates college readiness in Nebraska students
- The assessment provides more postsecondary opportunities for students in Nebraska

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### **A note on NSCAS Summative-Science**

- The Nebraska State Board of Education approved Nebraska’s College and Career Ready Standards for Science in 2017
- The NSCAS Summative-Science assessment will assess the college and career ready standards in the spring of 2021
- Districts have one year to adopt the Nebraska standards or standards deemed equal to or more rigorous, during which time assessments will continue to reflect legacy standards
- Scores may vary during this transition process as instruction shifts to reflect these standards